

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 IO-10 AGR-05

COME-00 OMB-01 IGA-01 MC-02 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-02 H-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 /079 W

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R 201053Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USSAG/7AF NKP TH

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1827

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 4669

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, CB, TH

SUBJ: RICE FOR CAMBODIA AIRDROP

REF: (1) PHNOM PENH 4875; (2) USSAG 180872Z MAR 75;
(3) BANGKOK 4572

1. DESPITE EARLIER INDICATIONS OF THAILAND'S READINESS
TO TOLERATE TRANSSHIPMENT OF PL 480 RICE VIA THAILAND
TO CAMBODIA IN SMALL QUANTITIES, SITUATION REMAINS
VERY UNCERTAIN HERE.

2. ON MARCH 19, WE BRIEFED CHIEF OF STAFF, SUPREME
COMMAND, GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN ON NEAK LUONG
SITUATION, EMPHASIZING THAT WE HAD BEEN DOING OUR BEST
TO CONSERVE LIMITED SUPPLIES OF PL 480 RICE ON HAND
AT SAME SAN, BUT THAT CURRENT SITUATION AT NEAK LUONG
MADE AIRDROP MANDATORY.

3. WE ACKNOWLEDGED DIFFICULTIES THIS HAD IN PAST
POSED FOR RTG AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR
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PERSONAL RISKS KRIANGSAK HAD TAKEN IN APPROVING

SHIPMENTS ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY. WE SAID THAT IN RECOGNITION OF THIS, WE WERE ATTEMPTING TO SEE WHETHER ALTERNATIVE MEANS TO SUPPLY NEAK LUONG COULD BE FOUND. WE SAID THAT WE EXPECTED TO ASCERTAIN THIS WITHIN A FEW DAYS, AND THAT IF NO ALTERNATIVES EXISTED, WE WOULD THEN ONCE AGAIN HAVE TO ASK HIS ASSISTANCE IN TRANSSHIPMENT OF PL 480 RICE THROUGH THAILAND.

4. KRIANGSAK IN RESPONSE CONFINED HIMSELF TO MAKING HIS USUAL REMARKS ABOUT THE PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY OF THIS MATTER, AND COMPARING HIMSELF TO A PITCHER THAT GOES TO THE WELL TOO OFTEN.

5. LATER ON SAME EVENING, NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND HEAD OF CHART THAT PARTY, MAJOR GENERAL PRAMARN ADIREKSARN, REPORTEDLY TOLD PRESS US ARMS SUPPLY FOR CAMBODIA OUT OF THAILAND MUST CEASE. IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR JUST WHAT PRAMARN SAID OR WHAT THIS MEANS. WE WILL BE TREATING THIS QUESTION IN A SEPARATE TELEGRAM. AT THE VERY LEAST, HOWEVER, THIS KIND OF PUBLIC ATTENTION TO SCOOT WILL FURTHER DAMPEN KRIANGSAK'S ENTHUSIASM FOR ASSISTING US WITH PL 480 RICE TRANSSHIPMENTS. WE SHOULD THEREFORE NOT REINTRODUCE RICE QUESTION UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

6. ONE POSSIBLE WAY TO AVOID THIS WOULD BE BY AIRDROPPING RICE FOR NEAK LUONG OUT OF TAN SON NHUT IN VIETNAM. WE ARE INFORMED BY MACTHAI THAT BIRD AIR C-130'S COULD BE PRE-RIGGED AT UTAPAO AND FLOWN TO TAN SON NHUT WHERE ADDITION OF PALLETIZED RICE WOULD BE SIMPLY OPERATION. SAME PERSONNEL NOW CONDUCTING GROUND OPERATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH DC-8 RICE LIFT COULD BE USED, AND SUPERVISION AND INSPECTION COULD BE CARRIED OUT BY BIRD'S C-130 LOADMASTERS ALREADY ON BOARD.

7. WE NOW HAVE ON HAND AT SAME SAN ABOUT 800 SHORT TONS PL 480 RICE, AND THESE SHOULD BE CAREFULLY HUSBANDED
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FOR GENUINE EMERGENCY USE AS REQUIRED AT ENCLAVES, SINCE THERE IS REAL POSSIBILITY THAT NO MORE PL 480 RICE MAY BE TRANSSHIPPED THROUGH THAILAND. WOULD APPRECIATE ACTION ADDRESSEES QUICKEST RESPONSE TO PROPOSAL PARA 6.
MASTERS

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